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Regional cooperation

Regional cooperation in the economic, social and related fields

Report of the Secretary-General*

Addendum

Matters brought to the attention of the Economic and Social Council: Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific

Summary

The present addendum to the report of the Secretary-General on regional cooperation in the economic, social and related fields contains information on the resolutions adopted by the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific at its seventy-third session, held in Bangkok from 15 to 19 May 2017. The full texts of the resolutions are available from www.regionalcommissions.org/our-work/regional-commissions-sessions-resolutions-and-decisions.

* The present report was submitted late owing to the need to incorporate the resolutions adopted by the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific at its seventy-third session, which ended on 19 May 2017.

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Matters brought to the attention of the Economic and Social Council

Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific

1. At its seventy-third session, held in Bangkok from 15 to 19 May 2017, the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific adopted a number of resolutions relating to its programme of work, a summary of which is set out below for the attention of the Economic and Social Council.

Resolution 73/1
A conference structure of the Commission aligned with the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development

2. The Commission decided to revise, with immediate effect, its conference structure, to ensure that it is fit for purpose and in line with the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (General Assembly resolution 70/1). In that connection, the Commission decided that the subsidiary structure of the Commission shall also include the Asia-Pacific Forum on Sustainable Development, whose terms of reference are annexed to the resolution, and that regional institutions under the auspices of the Commission shall include the Asian and Pacific Centre for the Development of Disaster Information Management. The Commission invited development partners to collaborate with it in promoting sustainable development in the Asia-Pacific region; requested the Executive Secretary to continue to strengthen and promote communication, cooperation and collaboration among the relevant organizations of the United Nations development system in Asia and the Pacific in support of the implementation of the 2030 Agenda; and also requested the Executive Secretary to continue to undertake systematic monitoring and evaluation of the conference structure and its congruence with the programme priorities of the Commission, with a view to increasing efficiency, effectiveness and synergies. The Commission decided to conduct a review of the conference structure in 2022, with a midpoint review in 2019, and requested the Executive Secretary to submit a report, with a focus on the programme areas of the Commission, to serve as the basis for that review.

Resolution 73/2
Strengthening the regional mechanism for the implementation of the Vienna Programme of Action for Landlocked Developing Countries for the Decade 2014-2024

3. The Commission reaffirmed that the Vienna Programme of Action for Landlocked Developing Countries for the Decade 2014-2024 (General Assembly resolution 69/137, annex II) constitutes a fundamental framework for genuine partnerships between landlocked developing countries, transit countries and their development partners at the national, bilateral, subregional, regional and global levels. The Commission invited landlocked developing countries, transit countries, their development partners, the United Nations system and all other stakeholders to implement, at all levels, the relevant actions agreed upon in the Vienna Programme of Action under its priorities for action, including fundamental transit policy issues, infrastructure development and maintenance, international trade and trade facilitation, regional integration and cooperation, structural economic transformation and means of implementation.

4. The Commission requested the Executive Secretary to continue to support the development efforts of landlocked developing countries; to continue to provide all possible assistance to Asia-Pacific landlocked developing countries in the

implementation of the Vienna Programme of Action; to continue to ensure the coordinated follow-up to and monitoring of the implementation of the Vienna Programme of Action and submit related annual analytical reports; and to report to the Commission at its seventy-fifth session on the progress made in the implementation of the resolution.

Resolution 73/3
Advancing integrated and seamless connectivity for sustainable development in Asia and the Pacific

5. The Commission resolved to continue efforts and cooperation on regional connectivity to achieve integrated and seamless connectivity and encourage members and associate members to promote dialogue on policy coordination and cooperation in the areas of infrastructure, trade, finance, people-to-people exchanges, transport, energy and information and communications technology. The Commission invited member States that have not yet done so to become parties to the Intergovernmental Agreement on the Trans-Asian Railway network, the Intergovernmental Agreement on the Asian Highway Network and the Intergovernmental Agreement on Dry Ports.

6. The Commission requested the Executive Secretary to continue to explore ways to comprehensively integrate sustainable development into regional connectivity and the regional integration process; to continue to provide the support necessary to promote integrated and seamless connectivity for sustainable development in the areas of transport, trade, energy and information and communications technology in the region; to continue efforts to facilitate discussions, provide capacity-building and policy advice, and exchange of best practices among members and associate members on applying new innovative technologies to connectivity; to continue to cooperate with members and associate members to support their effective implementation of infrastructure projects associated with national, subregional, and regional initiatives; to prepare a report on integrated and seamless connectivity for sustainable development in Asia and the Pacific in 2018, to be updated every three years until 2030; and to continue to build and strengthen partnerships between the Commission and key stakeholders to promote integrated and seamless connectivity and sustainable development.

Resolution 73/4
Implementation of the Ministerial Declaration on Sustainable Transport Connectivity in Asia and the Pacific

7. The Commission endorsed the Ministerial Declaration on Sustainable Transport Connectivity in Asia and the Pacific (E/ESCAP/73/15/Add.1) and encouraged all parties to the Intergovernmental Agreement on the Asian Highway Network to consider accession to the Intergovernmental Agreement on International Road Transport along the Asian Highway Network.

8. The Commission requested the Executive Secretary to accord priority to the implementation of the Regional Action Programme for Sustainable Transport Connectivity in Asia and the Pacific, phase I (2017-2021) (E/ESCAP/73/15/Add.1, annex I); carry out in 2021 an evaluation of the implementation of phase I and submit a report with recommendations to the Ministerial Conference on Transport at its fourth session; accelerate the ongoing work towards the establishment and full functioning of the interregional coordination committee on transport between Asia and Europe; continue to support the implementation of the Intergovernmental Agreement on International Road Transport along the Asian Highway Network; and report to the Commission at its seventy-fifth and seventy-seventh sessions on the implementation of the resolution.

Resolution 73/5
Strengthening Asia-Pacific's support for the United Nations Conference to Support the Implementation of Sustainable Development Goal 14

9. The Commission called upon members and associate members to support the United Nations Conference to Support the Implementation of Sustainable Development Goal 14: Conserve and sustainably use the oceans, seas and marine resources for sustainable development and encouraged them to consider making voluntary commitments, to share good practices, lessons learned and information on partnerships on oceans and seas, and to continue to enhance their capacity in relation to the sustainable management and use of oceans.

10. The Commission requested the Executive Secretary to continue to support current partnerships, as well as developing new partnerships, where appropriate, and the Conference to Support the Implementation of Sustainable Development Goal 14. It also requested the Executive Secretary to continue to support countries, especially the least developed countries, landlocked developing countries and small island developing States, in sharing experiences and cooperation on the management of natural resources, including oceans and seas, in the light of the regional road map for implementing the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development in Asia and the Pacific (E/ESCAP/73/31, annex II). It further requested the Executive Secretary to continue to support current regional partnerships and develop new regional partnerships for enhancing data and statistical capacities in relation to Goal 14.

Resolution 73/6
Implementation of the Asia-Pacific Information Superhighway initiative through regional cooperation

11. The Commission invited members and associate members to cooperate in the implementation of the Master Plan for the Asia-Pacific Information Superhighway (E/ESCAP/CICTSTI(1)/2) and the Asia-Pacific Information Superhighway Regional Cooperation Framework Document (E/ESCAP/CICTSTI(1)/3), as endorsed by the Committee on Information and Communications Technology, Science, Technology and Innovation at its first session. It also invited members and associate members to promote broad-based partnerships, including North-South, South-South and triangular cooperation, in support of the implementation of the Master Plan and the Framework Document.

12. The Commission requested the Executive Secretary to accord priority to the implementation of the Master Plan and the Framework Document; to continue to conduct research and analysis and capacity development to identify challenges and opportunities associated with the four pillars of the Asia-Pacific Information Superhighway initiative and the implementation of the strategic initiatives included in the Master Plan, including support for formulating regional, subregional and national action plans; to maximize opportunities created by the subregional offices and regional institutions of the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific in order to advance implementation of the Asia-Pacific Information Superhighway; and to report to the Committee on Information and Communications Technology, Science, Technology and Innovation at its second session on the progress made in the implementation of the Master Plan.

Resolution 73/7
Enhancing regional cooperation for the implementation of the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015-2030 in Asia and the Pacific

13. The Commission invited members and associate members to enhance the implementation of the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015-2030

(General Assembly resolution 69/283, annex II) and relevant initiatives, including the Bangkok Principles for the implementation of the health aspects of the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015-2030, with a view to ensuring more systematic cooperation, coherence and integration between disaster and health risk management. The Commission encouraged members and associate members, the United Nations and other international organizations and agencies, as well as all other stakeholders in the relevant fields, as appropriate, to provide support to the Asian and Pacific Centre for the Development of Disaster Information Management and to cooperate for the achievement of its objectives and the implementation of its work programme. The Commission invited member States to participate at the highest level in the Asian Ministerial Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction, to be held in Ulaanbaatar from 16 to 19 July 2018. The Commission invited members and associate members to consider contributing financial and other support to the Multi-Donor Trust Fund for Tsunami, Disaster and Climate Preparedness in Indian Ocean and Southeast Asian Countries in order to strengthen people-centred multi-hazard early warning systems in the region. It also invited them to observe World Tsunami Awareness Day.

14. The Commission requested the Executive Secretary to accord priority to synchronizing multidisciplinary support to member States in the mainstreaming of disaster risk reduction in their development strategies, in line with the Sendai Framework and with the Sustainable Development Goals and targets relating to disaster risk reduction. It also requested the Executive Secretary to enhance inter-agency coordination with the United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction and other relevant entities; to continue to support the work of the Expert Group on Disaster-related Statistics in Asia and the Pacific, including on a disaster-related statistics framework and its implementation guidelines for the enhancement of the capacity of national statistical systems in the region to produce and use disaster-related statistics; to continue to support and facilitate multi-hazard early warning systems, impact-based forecasting and disaster risk assessment to strengthen regional cooperation mechanisms; and to continue to accord priority to the implementation of the plan of action in promoting regional cooperation on space applications for the implementation of the Sendai Framework.

Resolution 73/8

Strengthening regional cooperation for sustainable energy development in Asia and the Pacific

15. The Commission endorsed the report of the Committee on Energy on its first session (E/ESCAP/73/30). It encouraged all members and associate members to develop and strengthen national, bilateral and multilateral programmes and projects aimed at strengthening regional energy cooperation and energy security as a driver to facilitate economic growth, social equality and prosperity, as well as environmental sustainability; to support energy projects that contribute to energy security in all its aspects in the region; to actively share experiences on their energy sector transition to renewable energy, energy efficiency, and advanced and cleaner fossil fuel technologies; and to formulate and implement innovative energy policies that are economically viable, socially acceptable and environmentally sound. The Commission decided to adjust its conference structure with regard to specific issues to be addressed by the Committee on Energy in order to enhance its alignment with the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

16. The Commission encouraged all members and associate members to participate in Expo 2017, on the theme "Future energy", which will be hosted by the Government of Kazakhstan in Astana from June to September 2017, and in the Ministerial Conference and the Eighth International Forum on Energy for

Sustainable Development, which will be held from 11 to 14 June 2017. The Commission created two expert working groups on energy connectivity and on universal access to modern energy services, renewable energy, energy efficiency and cleaner use of fossil fuels and emphasized that the Executive Secretary should utilize the outputs of the expert working groups in preparing reports for intergovernmental discussions at the Committee on Energy and the second Asian and Pacific Energy Forum.

17. The Commission requested the Executive Secretary to continue to assist members and associate members in building their capacity; to continue to conduct analytical studies and compile and disseminate relevant energy information and data; to contribute to the development of an inclusive and comprehensive set of recommendations for the agenda of the second Asian and Pacific Energy Forum; and to convene a preparatory meeting for the Forum.

Resolution 73/9
Regional road map for implementing the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development in Asia and the Pacific

18. The Commission endorsed the report of the Fourth Asia-Pacific Forum on Sustainable Development (E/ESCAP/73/31) and the regional road map for implementing the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development in Asia and the Pacific (E/ESCAP/73/31, annex II) and called upon member States to cooperate in the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, as provided for by the General Assembly in its resolution 70/1 and, at the regional level, in the light of the regional road map.

19. The Commission reiterated its request to the Executive Secretary to support member States in their efforts to implement the 2030 Agenda in an integrated manner and in the light of the regional road map. It requested the Executive Secretary, as convener of the Asia-Pacific Regional Coordination Mechanism, to strengthen and promote communication, cooperation and collaboration among the relevant organizations of the United Nations system in the Asia-Pacific region and other stakeholders, in support of the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals by member States, in particular the least developed countries, landlocked developing countries and Pacific island developing countries.